

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /091 W
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R 261220Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO /SECSTATE WASHDC 5525

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 4444

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, CB

SUBJECT: CONSCRIPTION UPDATE

REF: PHNOM PENH 4205

1. SUMMARY. WITH CONSCRIPTION CONTINUING TO PROVIDE ONLY ABOUT 450 MEN/WEEK, GKR OFFICIALS HAVE DECIDED TO EXPAND THE DRAFT TO COVER THE 26-35 AGE GROUP AS WELL AS 18-25 YEAR OLDS. THE DESERTER/DRAFT DODGER ROUNDUP HAS YET TO GET OUT OF FIRST GEAR. END SUMMARY.

2. IN THE PERIOD MARCH 19-25 EIGHTY-SIX DRAFTEES WERE FOUND FIT FOR SERVICE; VOLUNTEERS BROUGHT PHNOM PENH'S ACCESSIONS TO 451 MEN. RESPONSES TO DRAFT NOTICES RAN AT ABOUT 25PCT OF WHOM ROUGHLY ONE-HALF WERE FIT FOR SERVICE. SINCE THE CAMPAIGN STARTED OCTOBER 10, 1973, PHNOM PENH HAS SUPPLIED 16,536 OF 24,363 NEW RECRUITS CONSCRIPTED COUNTRYWIDE.

3. BECAUSE OF THIS CONTINUED POOR SHOWING, THE SECOND PHASE OF THE NATIONAL CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGN SWITCHED BUREAUCRATIC GEARS WITH A DECISION TO DRAFT HITHERTO UN-
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TOUCHED 26-35 YEAR OLDS BEGINNING MARCH 25. CITY

OFFICIALS ALSO DEMANDED THAT DISTRICTS (SANGKATS) ISSUE A CITYWIDE TOTAL OF 1,700 DRAFT NOTICES A DAY. (DRAFT NOTICES FROM THE MARCH 6 START OF THE CAMPAIGN TO MARCH 24 AVERAGED FEWER THAN 100/DAY.) TWO DISTRICT CHIEFS INTERVIEWED MARCH 25 SAID THEY SENT OUT 50 NOTICES DAILY (1/2 THEIR QUOTA) SUGGESTING THAT PERFORMANCE IN THIS CRITICAL AREA IS IMPROVING.

4. MIXED TEAMS FOR ROUNDING UP DESERTERS AND DRAFT DODGERS CONTINUE TO BE PLAGUED WITH TRANSPORT PROBLEMS. GONSCRIPTION OFFICIALS, HOWEVER, RESOLVED A MATTER OF MAJOR CONCERN IN A MARCH 21 MEETING BY ORDERING TEAMS TO SEND DESERTERS AND DRAFT DODGERS TO THE RECRUITMENT CENTER FOR TEMPORARY LODGING UNTIL DISPOSITION OF THEIR CASES. MOST TEAMS ARE NOW PRIMARILY OCCUPIED ROUNDING UP DESERTERS, A VERY FEW ARE SEEKING DRAFT DODGERS FROM THE FIRST PHASE OF THE CAMPAIGN, AND ONLY THREE MIXED TEAMS ARE AFTER DODGERS WHOSE TEN-DAY GRACE PERIOD HAS EXPIRED SINCE THE MARCH 6 START OF THE SECOND PHASE. THE FAULT IS THUS FAR WITH SANGKAT AUTHORITIES WHOSE SLOW START AT ISSUING DRAFT NOTICES HAS DELAYED IDENTIFICATION OF EVADERS.

5. CONSCRIPTION CHIEF OF STAFF BG YONG YOC HANG VISITED PAILIN MARCH 22 TO LOOK INTO THE PROVINCE GOVERNOR'S PLANS TO ROUND UP 5,000 DESERTERS IN THAT ISOLATED GEM-RICH SANCTUARY. HE FOUND LITTLE IN THE WAY OF ORGANIZATION FOR SUCH A MASSIVE UNDERTAKING AND LEFT INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GOVERNOR TO PROCEED CAREFULLY BY ARRESTING SMALL GROUPS OF DESERTERS AT A TIME.

ENDERS

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